Classroom management

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1 – Managing the Environment: Some Tips.

a) Room, furniture, seating arrangement (exploit the five senses)
- Make sure the room looks neat and cozy.
- Remember you can alter visual perception by putting up small pictures, posters, and/or bringing in any other object which you feel will attract your students' attention.
- Wear different perfume/cologne from time to time to stimulate olfactory learners. Spray some air freshener (always sparingly). Fruity scents will also stimulate gustatory learners.
- Change seating arrangement from time to time (or according to the kind of activity).

b) Entering/Leaving the room – what to do / why

As you enter:
- Check the room and adjust it to your class.
- Open windows to change the air. Close the windows if there is any distracting factor outside.
- Erase the board if there is anything written on it.
- Open all your files for that class and minimize them.

As you leave:
- Erase the board.
- Set the room back to its expected order.
- Clean after small objects.
- You can actually remind your students to take away their own litter. It is good, civilized behavior. (Brazilians have the awful habit of leaving bottles, cups, and wraps behind. This will get them into trouble if they are in a foreign country classroom.)
- As your students leave, quickly scan the room for objects (mainly under desks, chairs, and floor). Brazilian students often leave important things behind (so do some teachers).
- Make sure you have picked your flash drive off the computer.
- Be the last to leave the room.

c) Materials – size : quantity (ratio)
- The smaller the material you will use, the more copies of it you will need.
- Make sure pictures can be easily seen and texts can be comfortably read.
- If you need students to see details, bring in posters instead of small pictures.
- If you need students to read from their chairs, use font size 18 or larger.
- Make sure every piece of equipment is working properly before you start your class.
- When dealing with a projector, remember: "ON before OFF". Turn the projector on **before** you turn the lights off. Turn the lights on **before** you turn the projector off. This will prevent embarrassing darkness in the room, mainly at night.

d) Board: writing & erasing
- Practice writing on the board facing your students. It will keep them really connected.
- If writing on the board will take more than two minutes, make sure you give your students a task first so that they have something to do while you prepare the board.
- Always plan your board and make it look neat.

- Always use the eraser to erase the board. If you need to use your hand, bow on the word before you erase it. This will prevent the board from getting smudged, and you won't get your hand dirty either.
- If you have students write on the board in different groups, use different color markers. It will be easier to check their work.
- If you *accidentally* (don't make this a habit) write on the board with a color pen, "paint" over it with your whiteboard marker, blow on it, and then erase it with the eraser. This process will remove the color pen ink.

On the spur of the moment…

1 – Should we ever…? Why (not)?

a) end activities in their climax
- Yes. It will make students wish for more; it will keep their minds still connected, which will help them retain information from your feedback/delayed correction.
- Plan it well. If you think they will need six minutes to finish a task, give them five. It will also unconsciously teach them to focus on the task so they can complete it within the time limit.
- Always tell your students how long each activity is supposed to last.

b) Skip activities?
- Yes, if you realize an activity will be too easy/hard for your students' cognitive moment.
- Yes, if you realize the activity (in the book) is not appropriate for your students.
- Yes, if you realize class will soon be over and there still is another activity to be applied which is more important/necessary for your students.

c) Retry activities?
- Yes, if you realize students are not performing in accordingly.
- Yes, if you notice students still need more time to perform it naturally/fluently.
- Yes, if you realize students' performance still haven't met the activity objective.
  *** In all situations, you must give them feedback, apply any necessary correction, and model the activity once more **before** you let them try it again.

2 – STT x TTT – how to increase STT and reduce TTT?
STT
- Ask them more wh-questions than yn-questions.
- Ask them to explain/justify their answers.
- Prepare student-centered and task-centered activities.

TTT
- Do not say what your students can say for you.
- Do not give your opinion in the discussions (avoid participating in them).
- Do not interfere or make comments when students are telling you something.
- Don't say/explain what students can easily see/realize.
- Don't say what you are going to do. Simply do it.

- When correcting pronunciation, don't use lengthy explanations. Focus on the sound you want them to get; have them repeat it, and then add in the rest of the sentence.
- When correcting vocabulary, don't use lengthy explanations. Focus on the word you want them to adjust. The same applies to grammar.
- Edit your own sentences. Teacher's discourse is quite predictable. As you plan your lessons, you can easily think of what you will say and can edit it so that you can still say what you need to, but now using the fewest words possible.

TEACHER'S ROLES

Facilitator x Spoon-feeder

1 – Tips on how to facilitate learning:

a) Never fill in your ss' sentences when they can't find the right word. Wait.

b) Never answer your own questions when your ss won't. Lead them into the answers.

c) Never answer your ss' questions straightforwardly. Elicit them.

d) Never give clues and partial answers when Ss get stuck in an activity. Ask leading questions.

e) Never correct your ss' utterances straightforwardly. Have them self-correct.

f) When you contribute a word/correction during a s's talk, make him/her repeat it within his/her speech.

Be the Language Model

a) Teachers of English must constantly develop their productive vocabulary.

b) Teachers of English must constantly hone their grammar.

c) Teachers of English must constantly improve their pronunciation.

d) Teachers of English should choose and use one particular English accent. It will give students a sense of community as well as make them alert to accent and cultural differences.

e) Teachers of English must constantly learn about English interaction and turn-taking protocol.

f) Teachers of English must constantly learn about English etiquette. Teaching language means teaching behavior, too.

g) Teachers of English must constantly seek cultural information. Language reflects culture as much as culture reflects language.

Be the Role Model

a) Never support your teams in class. Teachers do not root for any teams (the individual behind the teaching mask does).

b) Never show any form of prejudice. Teachers respect all equally.

c) Teachers are not religious (or atheists). Avoid sharing what you think on this matter.

d) Teachers must always treat their ss with respect, attention, and care.

e) Teachers must always have politically correct views. It is our best safeguard.

f) Teachers are always in a good mood. (How you truly feel does not concern your students.)

g) Never make fun of a student.

h) Teachers of English will keep their distance from their students. It is culturally expected.

i) Teachers do not smoke. Teachers do not drink. Avoid talking about your addictions.

j) Teachers must boost ss' morale every single class. It will make them learn more confidently.

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